

--ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A positioning device has first and second object holders that are guided over a guiding surface extending parallel to an X-direction and parallel to a Y-direction perpendicular to the X-direction and which are displaceable over the guiding surface from a first position into a second position by means of a displacement system. The displacement system includes a first displacement unit and a second displacement unit to which the object holders can be alternately coupled. The first displacement unit is suitable for carrying out a first series of positioning steps of the first object holder in the first position and for displacing the first object holder from the first position into an intermediate position between the first and second positions. The second displacement unit is suitable for carrying out a second series of positioning steps of the second object holder in the second position, simultaneously with and independently of the first displacement unit, and for displacing the second object holder from the second position into the intermediate position. In the intermediate position, the object holders are exchanged, after which the first series of positioning steps can be carried out by the first displacement unit with the second object holder in the first position and the second series of positioning steps can be carried out by the second displacement unit with the first object holder in the second position. The positioning device is suitable for use in a lithographic device to carry out an exposure process with a first semiconductor substrate in an exposure position and, simultaneously therewith and independently thereof, a characterization process with a second semiconductor substrate in a characterization position.--